

# University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley Building Evacuation Guide



# Environmental Health, Safety, and Risk Management

## **BUILDING EVACUATION**

### **Purpose:**

To successfully evacuate all of the building occupants, the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) Environmental Health, Safety, and Risk Management (EHSRM) requests that all building supervisors designate faculty and/or staff as evacuation assistants.

## **EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

Please observe the following procedures  
in the event of an emergency

### **Building Supervisor:**

1. Call UTRGV Police Department and provide the nature and location of the emergency. In case of fire or other emergency that requires evacuation of the building, activate the fire alarm. **NOTE: Depending on the severity of the emergency, the initial notification may be made from an alternate location.**
2. Assist Evacuation Assistant(s) in clearing the building.
3. Do not let anyone enter the building until told to do so by the Fire Department, UTRGV PD or EHSRM personnel.
4. Notify UTRGV PD and/or Fire Department personnel of the location where individuals may be located within the building. **NOTE: Specifically inform emergency response personnel of individuals with disabilities location within the building.**

## Evacuation Assistant(s):

1. Keep calm and, if available and time permits, put on Orange Vest.
2. In case of fire or other emergency that requires evacuation of the building, activate the fire alarm.
3. Notify individuals on the floor to evacuate the building. Direct individuals to the nearest safe exit. Have the building occupants congregate a safe distance from the building. (Minimum of 150 feet)
4. As you are clearing the floor, turn off the lights and close the door behind you.
5. Once everyone on the floor has been notified to evacuate, assist with the evacuating of individuals with disabilities. If this is a multi-story building, assist individuals with disabilities to the nearest "area of refuge". If there is no immediate danger, assign an evac assistant to stay with the individual in the "area of refuge", after reassuring them that you are going for help, and immediately inform the UTRGV PD and/or Fire Department personnel of the individual's location.
6. In a life-threatening situation where immediate evacuation is necessary, the following options may be exercised:
  - a. Personally assist the individual down the stairs, if possible. Some crutch and cane users may be able to use the stairs and some may not. Ask them.
  - b. Wheelchair users may be carried in the chair only when at least three strong people are available who can control the chair.
  - c. In the event the situation is so severe that a decision is made to take an individual out of their wheelchair, any technique may be used. A few of the more common personnel transport techniques are:
    1. Piggy-back
    2. Cradle
    3. Drag

Judgment will need to be exercised in certain situations. For example, a badly hurt individual should normally not be moved. However, remaining in the building may pose a greater risk of increased injury during evacuation.

## Building Occupants:

1. Stay Calm. Stop what you are doing and leave the building.
2. Follow the directions given by the Evacuation Assistant(s).
3. Individuals with disabilities (particularly vision, hearing, or mobility impaired) should be encouraged to establish a buddy system. This will ensure that anyone needing evacuation assistance will have someone available to help them during an emergency.
4. Exit the building by using stairs. **DO NOT USE THE ELEVATORS.**
5. Once outside, stay at least 150 feet away from the building.
6. **DO NOT GO BACK IN THE BUILDING UNTIL THE ALL CLEAR** is given by the Fire Department, UTRGV Police or EHSRM personnel.

## Impaired Elevators

1. Mobility Impaired - Self-Identification list will be prepared identifying the individuals in need of assistance, forwarded to and maintained by EHSRM.
2. There is the potential for notification of the elevator situation to either to the UTRGV Police, Physical Plant or the EHSRM. The department that is notified should in turn notify the other respective departments.
3. Physical Plant will notify the building occupants of the situation by placing signs on the elevator and the exit doors of the building. The sign will read as follows:

**Elevator(s) are currently out of order. We apologize for this inconvenience. If you need assistance, please call 665-7151. In the event of an emergency call 882-7777.**

*(Note – signs are located in each of the elevator rooms)*

4. The EHSRM will evaluate the Mobility Impaired - Self-Identification list and determine whether there is an individual who will need assistance.
5. The EHSRM will, in turn, contact the individual who needs assistance and make arrangements with the individual to transport them down the steps at the appropriate time.
6. EHSRM personnel and UTRGV PD Officers will then travel to the location at the appropriate time and help the individual to exit the building. One of the following

methods will be used , depending on the specific situation and the individual's preferences:

- a. Evacuation Chair
    - i. Chairs are located at the following location:
      1. The EHSRM offices
      2. UTRGV PD
  - b. Individuals in Wheel Chairs
    - i. Care should be taken to ensure the individual is not injured or experiencing any significant discomfort during the transport process.
    - ii. If possible, the chair should be elevated so to eliminate stress on the individual being transported.
7. When the elevator is working, the physical plant will notify the UTRGV PD and the EHSRM.
  8. The physical plant will remove the signs from the elevator doors and exterior doors.
  9. The EHSRM or physical plant will notify the mobility impaired individual that the elevator is fixed.